The Cerrillos Rustler.

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CERRILLOS - - - NEW MEXICO

THE OLDEST O' THEM ALL.

You may see him any evening sitting just outside the door
Of a pretty rural cottage that the vines have clambered o'er,
And the pink and cherry blossoms slyly peep about him there,
Like so many fairies playing hide-and-seek behind his chair.

He's a lean and slippered figure, and his step is far from light,
There are furrows in his forehead and his hair is snowy white.
And his cheeks, like ancient parchment, wrinkled, yellow, sunken, grim,
Yet not a drummer in the land but doffs the hat to him.

He can sing (his voice will quaver) songs forgotten long ago
By the present generation, songs our fathers used to know.
And their rhythm quaint reminds you of a brook and falling leaves,
And a maple-shadowed cottage with the swallows 'neath the eaves.

He can tell you of adventures that will thrill your soul with fear,
Or recount a world of incidents you'll laugh for hours to hear,
While his eyes anew will sparkle 'neath his hat's extended rim—
Oh! not a drummer in the land but yields the palm to him.

How his withered form will straighten as he "reckons in his day
Ther wasn't narry ov 'em, when he 'tended that-a-way."
With the "peart and smilin' lassies" that he met along his "raout,"
When he chose to show his samples "as could lay the old man aout."

He will tell you of a stage-coach, with its flyers, six or more,
Faster than our modern engines, with their smoke, and dust, and roar,
Sweeping 'round the yawning canyons, even as the swallows skim;
Ah! not a drummer of them all but doffs the hat to him.

When the evening shadows lengthen, if the breeze is blowing fair,
From beneath his faded jacket he will take, with tender care,
A locket, worn and dented, wherein, framed in curls of gold,
Smiles a face that to the oldest will be never, never old.

And a mist will dash his glasses, and grow tremulous his tone,
And he tells you how, since Anna died, he's made the trip alone,
And ere the tale is finished other eyes than his are dim
Oh! not a drummer but is proud to doff the hat to him.

Half the stories of a century are hidden in his breast,
To come forward at his bidding in the quaintest language drest;
And he takes such pleasure in them that 'twould really seem a crime
Not to listen and applaud them tho' it's for the hundredth time.

On the verge of ocean drifting, like a ship without a mast,
All his blessings in the future, all his pleasures in the past;
Heaven bless him for this lesson, 'tis not strength of mind or limb,
But a cheerful, sunny spirit wins the hearts of all to him.

The sun of life is setting on the evening of his day,
And ere long his gentle spirit will have passed from earth away;
We shall miss the well-known figure from his seat beside the door,
And the first and oldest drummer we shall see or hear no more;

But an army of his fellows still his memory will keep,
While children laugh, or manhood strives, or broken households weep;
And oft on blust'ring winter nights around the cheering flame,
Will heads be bowed and speech be hushed at mention of his name.

—Charles Eugene Banks, in Arkansaw Traveler.

MR. PORTMAN BROWN was a prosperous, elderly gentleman, of quiet ways and fixed habits. A small circle of familiar friends supplied all his social needs, he concerned himself little with the rest of humanity, belonging to the class who can live side by side in the same street with a fellow-creature all their lives without so much as knowing them by sight.

Among Mr. Brown's fixed habits was a yearly tour.

But he did not take it, like most people, in the summer months, but in the early spring. Regularly as the first week in March came round, he went abroad. A common place tour, in beaten tracks, following the usual routine of travel in steamers and trains, and lodging at palatial hotels. No adventure had ever broken the uneventful record of these tours for over a quarter of a century; no more exciting incident than an unusual overcharge at some hotel had come within Portman Brown's personal experience.

In 18—, when March came round, he made the usual preparations for his yearly tour in his usual way.

On the evening before his departure, an old city friend, Mr. Goldsmith, dined with him at his house in Harley street. When about to leave, Goldsmith drew a small case from his pocket.

"I brought this with me on the chance that you were going to Cannes. You will do me a great favor by giving it into my brother's hands there. It contains a brilliant of such rare value that I could trust it to few. It will give you no trouble, being so small; there will be no risk, as no one will know you have such a thing with you."

"Anything to oblige a friend," said Brown, lightly. "I would take the Koh-i-noor as a traveling companion under the same circumstances."

The two men were standing at the study window, the blind of which happened to be up. While in the act of placing the case in his pocket Brown's eyes wandered to the street. At the moment the light from a lamp in front of the door struck on the face of a man who was passing—or had he been standing there?—a peculiar dark face, with straight black whiskers.

The man moved on.

Brown drew back hastily.

"None of your people knew that you were giving me this commission?" he inquired of Goldsmith.

"Not a soul, my dear fellow; the matter is entirely between you and me. My head clerk alone knows of the existence of the brilliant."

"What is he like?"

"Like you, like me. Respectability itself! What are you thinking of?"

"Has he white whiskers?"

"Gray as a badger's—white, even! But, bless my soul, what is the matter? What do you mean? Have you seen anyone?"

A man was standing there by the lamp post as you handed me the jewel case. He was apparently looking at us, and might have heard what we said."

"Then he must be in the street still," said Goldsmith, throwing up the window and putting his head out. Brown did the same. The night was bright. Not a soul was to be seen anywhere; the street was quite deserted.

"A neighbor or a neighbor's butler. He has gone into some house." Goldsmith withdrew from the window. "In any case, no one could have heard, nor, I should think, have seen us. As for my clerk, Travers, I boast myself an honest man, but I don't hesitate to acknowledge that he is the honester of the two. Your imagination is playing you tricks. I didn't know you were given that way. Perhaps you would rather not take charge of the brilliant?"

But Brown would not hear of this. Already shamefaced over his hasty and somewhat ridiculous suspicions, he dismissed them abruptly.

"Not for worlds would I give up the charge," he said. "I'm not such a fool as I seem. The man probably is one

THEY WERE STANDING AT THE STUDY WINDOW.

of the new neighbors; there are a good many newcomers in the street."

Portman Brown set next morning for Lucerne via Brussels and the Rhine, staying a few days at Ostend on the way. He took his place in the undeniable comfort of a first-class carriage in the express to Brussels with a mind as free from care and uneasiness as an elderly gentleman ever possessed. A life of plain, undiluted prose had, up to this, kept his imaginative faculties in complete abeyance; lunatics, hypnotists, murderers, etc., as possible fellow-travelers, had never entered his mind. As a rule, indeed, his fellow-travelers no more excited his interest or notice than his near neighbors at home. On this occasion he was just conscious, in leaving the station at Ostend, that an elderly couple were the other occupants of the carriage; he merely gave a passing glance from his newspaper at the man, a stranger, who got in at Bruges and sat down on the opposite seat.

Nearly an hour had passed before Brown laid down his newspaper, and when he did he was horrified to see in the traveler who got in at Bruges the dark-faced man who had excited his suspicion when he started from London.

At Brussels Brown dodged the dark-faced man.

Never within the whole course of his experience in foreign ports had Brown passed a more wretched night; the morning found his nerves in a sad state. He, who had never before known himself the possessor of nerves! The fidgety man who made fussy arrangements about starting by the first train for Lucerne, and whose eyes had a way of casting furtive—not to say apprehensive—glances around, was strangely unlike the self-satisfied, phlegmatic Briton who had arrived the evening before at the Three Kings.

The success of this maneuver in leaving Brussels made him repeat it; besides he was in a perfect fever to get to the end of his journey, and rid himself of the charge of the diamond. His spirits rose considerably as the hour of the train's departure drew near without any appearance of the "shadower" in the station. Brown remained on the platform until the last moment, then, with a fervent sigh of relief, he entered the railway carriage. The train was just moving off when the door was suddenly opened, a breathless porter dashed in a handbag and parcel of rugs, followed by a still more breathless traveler. The door was shut, the engine shrieked the last departing signal, the train moved from Hale station. In one corner of the carriage sat Brown; in another—the farthest on the opposite side — sat the man with the black whiskers!

How often—in fancy—we place ourselves in heroic situations, and there—in fancy— act with invariable heroism. It is quite different, however, when the heroic situation is a reality; our consequent actions are liable to be quite different, too. The position in which Brown now found himself might well have appalled the bravest. He was alone in a railway carriage with a scoundrel who had followed him from London; Brown had utterly abandoned surmise since last night and accepted each idea as an absolute certainty—the object in this scoundrel's view was the capture of the valuable diamond, which was at that very moment on Brown's person. A long journey lay before them and Brown was unarmed. At this review of the situation his heart sank; he drew back instinctively into the corner. His eyes suddenly met those of the other man; a deep flush suffused his face, which seemed to find reflection in the other's. Brown hastily took up Baedeker and affected to read, the man opposite simultaneously did the same. A transparent unreality on both sides. Brown's furtive glances invariably caught—quickly withdrawn though they were—those of the other man leveled on him. While this went on, the slightest change of position, the least movement in the opposite corner made Brown start. Might it not herald the approach of danger? A spring, a rush, the attack!

The tension was terrible; to remain inactive almost impossible. Brown had an inspiration, as a man in extremity sometimes has. Though he was not armed, he would pretend to be. That might do something; produce hesitation or delay, at least. Accordingly, he deliberately assumed a bold, even threatening demeanor. Casting a truculent glance across the carriage, he plunged his hand into his pocket, affecting to grasp an imaginary revolver. To his intense delight the ruse took immediate effect. The man opposite gave an unmistakable start, and shrank back into his corner. So far, so good. But how to keep up the pretense? What to do next? At this crisis the whistling of the engine suddenly distracted Brown. Good heavens! He had forgotten the long tunnel! They were coming to it now! His eyes, with a quick, involuntary movement, sought the lamp. It was not lighted!

Entrapped! Doomed! The wildest thoughts rushed confusedly to his brain. With a shriek the train plunged noisily into the tunnel, into darkness. The din and rattle outside contrasted sharply with the silence within the carriage. Crouched in his corner, Brown, his hearing sharpened to agonizing acuteness, listened for a stir, a rustle, the sound of human breathing drawing nearer to him. Every moment fancy detected a step, a stealthy, catlike movement. His imagination, after the neglect of a lifetime, was now taking ample revenge. Uncontrolled and uncontrollable were its wild flights. Every railway murder of which he had ever heard flashed upon him with all the ghastly details. The spring upon the victim, the struggle, the death-stroke, the body thrown out on the rails. How idly he had read of these things happening to other men! But now to realize himself as the victim; his, the body! Absolute panic seized upon him; hardly knowing what he was doing, he tried softly to open the door. It was locked, however. His movements must have been heard, there was a stir at the other end of the carriage. The fatal moment had come, the assassin was advancing to the attack. In the extremity of his terror Brown sank swiftly on the floor and crawled under the seat.

For what length of time he crouched there, half stifled, scarcely daring to breathe, Brown knew not. Agony cannot measure time. A sudden and extraordinary rush of air made his heart first stand still, and then sent the blood coursing wildly through his veins. The far door was swinging open! Something had happened! And what?

His straining ears detected no sound but the outside rattle and roar of the train through the tunnel; within all was silence. He remained listening in intense excitement and amazement until the hope which had hardly dared to stir in his breast grew into vigorous life. He was alone in the carriage! He was saved! Deliverance had come miraculously—why and how he knew not!

The tunnel was coming to an end; light began to stream into the carriage. Cautiously and slowly Brown peeped from under the seat. He was quite alone. The man had disappeared.

The fact of his escape was, at the time, enough for Brown. Afterward, in thinking over the adventure, he surmised that the man, deceived by his (Brown's) attempt to turn the handle of the door, had followed in supposed pursuit.

At the station, just outside the tunnel, Brown—alighting almost before the train had stopped—changed his place for one in a crowded second-class compartment. A few hours later the brilliant was safely transferred from his charge into that of Goldsmith's brother at Lucerne.

The rest of the tour was uneventful; he neither heard of nor saw his persecutor again.

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Brown's adventure made quite a sensation on his return to London. He was the hero of the hour in his circle. Whether or not he related the circumstances exactly, as here set forth, need not be mentioned. His friend Jones, among others, gave a dinner party in his honor. Brown, with his usual punctuality, was the first of the guests to arrive.

"By the way," Jones said chaffingly to him, as the two stood chatting to-

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gether on the hearth-rug, "you must look to your laurels to-night, Brown. Do you know Leroy, your neighbor in Harley street?"

"Never saw the man in my life. What's the joke?"

"A rival adventure! In Switzerland, too, and culminating in a tunnel—not sure that it wasn't the Olten one also!"

"Dear me! What an extraordinary coincidence!"

"In this case it was a lunatic, not a robber. He was shadowed at hotels and trains. You must hear the story from his own lips; he's dining here to-night. The climax is terrific. Shut into a railway carriage alone with a lunatic, aforesaid lunatic armed with a revolver. A long tunnel, an extinguished lamp, the lunatic crawling in the darkness to the attack, an escape by the skin of his teeth. Leroy has sufficient presence of mind to open the door and pretend to go out, in reality crawling under the seat instead. The ruse saved his life. He supposed that he fainted in the stifling air, for, when he was next conscious, the train had left Olton and he was alone in the carriage, from which all traces of the lunatic had disappeared."

Jones was so engrossed in telling the story, he did not remark its curious and startling effect on Brown.

Just then the door was thrown open, and the footman announced "Mr. Leroy."

Jones, springing forward with effusion to greet the newcomer, led him gushingly up to Brown.

"You two must know each other," he said.

And they did. The recognition was instantaneous on both sides. With a gasp, Brown stared in speechless wonder on the man with the black whiskers, while Leroy stared back aghast on encountering the gaze of the lunatic!—London Truth.

Catching a Swordfish.

A Fall River fisherman had an adventure with a swordfish which came near being fatal to the man and resulted in the capture of the fish in a most novel manner. The fisherman in question belonged to the crew of the Hattie Ellen, which frequently makes trips for swordfish. On this occasion a large fish was sighted and struck a few miles off Brenton's reef lightship. When struck it at once darted off through the water, carrying forty fathoms of line and a large keg. For an hour it raced on. A man in a row-boat followed, and when the fish stopped, the man, believing it ready to give up, began hauling in the line. The fish came in all right for a time. Suddenly, however, it started from the bottom, came to the surface with a rush, stuck its sword through the boat and came near swamping it. The sailor had a narrow escape from being impaled on the sword; it grazed his pantaloons. Seeing that the swordfish had obligingly come to him, however, the sailor quickly resolved to hold it. He took a halfhitch around the sword sticking through the boat, and the game was secure. The schooner soon bore down upon the boat, and the sailor with the fish was taken aboard. The fish weighed two hundred and fifty pounds.—Youth's Companion.

—Teacher (of class in physiology)—"Why is it that when one is frightened the hair seems to stand on end?" Bobby Shackleford (who hasn't looked at the lesson)—"It doesn't, ma'am. A frightened hare always runs."

—She—"Why did a young man like him marry that elderly woman?" He—"To get even with her daughter for being a sister to him."—Kate Field's Washington.

HOUSEHOLD BREVITIES.

—Whole cloves will exterminate the industrious and merciless moth. They are more effectual as a destroying agent than either tobacco, camphor or cedar shavings.

—Equal parts of cream-tartar and saltpeter make an excellent remedy for rheumatism. Take one-half teaspoonful of the mixture and divide it into three doses. Take one of these doses three times a day.

—Plate Doilies.—Where tea is served on a polished table without a tablecloth, dainty plate doilies are placed under each plate. These are either hemstitched, fringed, or the design worked with the buttonhole short-and-long stitch, so the design can be cut out on the edge.—Ladies' Home Journal.

—To polish patent-leather boots or shoes, mix a tablespoonful of sweet oil with a teaspoonful of turpentine, and rub it over the leather with a bit of sponge, polishing afterwards with a bit of soft rag. If there are any cracks in the leather fill them up with common boot-blacking before you use the oil and turpentine.

—Candy.—Two cups white sugar, one-third cup good vinegar, enough water to moisten the sugar, boil in an agate iron or porcelain pan (without stirring) over a quick fire. In fifteen minutes try in cold water. Before it hardens, flavor with nearly a teaspoonful of vanilla or lemon. Pour on a buttered plate. Pull. Do not stir at any time.—Detroit Free Press.

—Beef au Miroton.—Cut some thin slices of cold beef and one large onion or two small ones into slices and fry them a nice brown in a quarter of a pound of butter, turn the pan around frequently to prevent the meat from burning. Then boil up half a pint of beef broth, seasoned with a little pepper and salt. Put it over the meat, and serve as hot as possible.—Boston Herald.

—A simple method of stewing apples is to cut them into quarters and put them in a thick earthen pudding dish. To every quart of apple quarters pour over a half cup of water and add a cup of sugar. Cover the pudding dish with a thick earthen plate, and set it in the oven for one hour. At the end of this time the apples will be found clear and transparent, thoroughly cooked and almost unbroken in form.—N. Y. Tribune.

—People who are subject to catarrhal ailments have special need to be particular in regard to their feet covering; they should see to it that their feet are always comfortably clad, their shoes should have substantial soles, and should come well up the ankles, and not be laced or buttoned tight. Light merino stockings or half-hose may be sufficient for warmth, but whenever by reason of much exercise the feet have become damp, and especially if the leather has absorbed wet, it is wise for a change to be made in both stockings and shoes.

—Chocolate Custards.—A delicious dessert is made as follows: Four cups milk, four eggs, one cup sugar, four tablespoonfuls grated chocolate, two teaspoonfuls vanilla. Put the chocolate over the fire in a double boiler with part of the milk, and let it cook until smooth; add the rest of the milk, and, when this is hot, pour it upon the sugar mixed with the beaten yolks of the eggs. Return to the stove, and cook until the custard begins to thicken; when cool, pour into glasses or small cups, and heap on the top of each a meringue made of the whites of the eggs whipped stiff with a little powdered sugar. Or it may be served in a large dish. An agreeable variation may be made by substituting for the chocolate half a cup of strong coffee.—Boston Budget.

The Summer Shoe.

"These loose-fitting russet leather shoes that are now worn so generally in summertime cause us lots of trouble," said a shoe clerk in a big up-town store the other day. "You see, the summer shoes are so much more roomy than the ordinary shoes that the foot broadens, and then when our customers, especially those who wear the summer shoes all the season, come to get fitted with an ordinary shoe they wonder why we cannot fit them as easily as usual and why the size that used to fit them pinches and cramps their feet. We have to give some of our customers half a size larger, and those who like to have their feet look as small as possible protest that it is the fault of our stock, when it is of course the fault of their summer shoes. The low shoes that so many women wear in summer cause us more trouble even than the men's russet shoes. These low shoes, or ties, worn constantly develop the insteps, and then of course it is very hard to get a shoe as small as the one the customer was in the habit of wearing. Then comes real trouble. It is hard to break the news to a young and pretty woman that her foot has grown larger during the summer, and it is still harder to get her to believe that tramping over mountains and sauntering on the seashore in low shoes has given her a bigger instep."—N. Y. Times.

Prescribed By the Authorities.

Sympathic But Near-Sighted Lady (to tramp filling temporary engagement at stone pile)—Poor man! That work seems hard and you look dreadfully tired. Don't you ever take a vacation?

Tramp (pounding away drearily)—I'm on my vacation now, mum.—Chicago Tribune.